



COURSE DATA

DATA SUBJECT

Code: 36609
Name: Theory and practice of documentary filmmaking
Cycle: Undergraduate Studies
ECTS Credits: 6
Academic year: 2025-26

STUDY (S)

Degree	Center	Acad. year	Period
1333 - Degree in Audiovisual Communication	Facultat de Filologia, Traducció i Comunicació	4	Second quarter
1333 - Degree in Audiovisual Communication	Facultat de Filologia, Traducció i Comunicació	3	Second quarter

SUBJECT-MATTER

Degree	Subject-matter	Character
1333 - Degree in Audiovisual Communication	Complementos formativos de carácter optativo	ELECTIVES
1333 - Degree in Audiovisual Communication	Complementos formativos de carácter optativo	ELECTIVES

COORDINATION

SANCHEZ BIOSCA VICENTE

SUMMARY

Theory and Practice of Documentary Filmmaking is an elective course of the Degree in Audiovisual Communication that provides a framework for a theoretical and practical approach to the nature styles modes, and voices of documentary making. Likewise, it aims at developing this genre's evolution as a social, technological, communicative and artistic output. Throughout the sessions, we will proceed to the analysis of various documentary works both from an aesthetic point of view. In the practical classes, the students are driven to design, shoot, and edit a 5-minute documentary piece.

PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER SUBJECTS OF THE SAME DEGREE

There are no specified enrollment restrictions with other subjects of the curriculum.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS



Although this is not a requirement, it is highly recommended that the student holds a level of English equivalent at least to a B2, since the lectures, as well as the bibliography and filmography, are available only in that language.

COMPETENCES / LEARNING OUTCOMES

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Students must be able to apply their knowledge to their work or vocation in a professional manner and have acquired the competences required for the preparation and defence of arguments and for problem solving in their field of study.

Students must be able to communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to both expert and lay audiences.

Students should be able to defend a culture of peace and respect for the fundamental human rights within the processes of communication, specifically in regards to equality between women and men in all types of communication (informative, interpretative, semiotic, dialogic and opinion).

Students should be able to experiment and innovate through the understanding and use of the applied methods and technologies.

Students should be able to obtain and select relevant information and sources in order to solve problems and elaborate on strategies.

Students should be able to search for, select, read, interpret and analyse both written and audiovisual texts and documents (analytically, synthetically and critically).

Students should be able to understand and apply the techniques and processes of audiovisual creation and transmission in their different phases, in not only cinema but also television, video and other multimedia forms from the point of view of the staging, from the initial idea until the final product. This leads to the ability to create and direct the staging of cinematographic, video-graphic or televised audiovisual productions, taking responsibility for the direction of actors and adjusting to the script, work plan or existing budget.

Students should be able to understand and apply the techniques and processes of audiovisual production and transmission in the different phases, from the conception of a project until its commercialisation. This knowledge will lead to the development of the ability to plan and manage human resources, budget and technological resources, including all the processes involved in the management of audiovisual companies in their various fields.

Students should be able to work as a team, communicate their own ideas and integrate themselves into group projects aimed at achieving results.

Students should have an understanding of the different languages, codes and modes of representation used in the different technological and audiovisual mediums such as photography, cinema, radio, television, electronic image and video, internet etc., through their own individual industries and aesthetics, as well as through the evolution of their social and cultural relevance through time. This should generate the ability to analyse stories and audiovisual works, considering the iconic messages of the texts as products of the



social, political and cultural conditions in which they were produced.

Students should have initiative, creativity, credibility, honesty, leadership spirit and responsibility, both personally and professionally.

Students should have the capacity and creativity necessary to take expressive and thematic risks within the scope and timeframes of communicative production, applying well-founded solutions and perspectives to the development of projects.

Students should possess the ability to organise and plan their tasks, performing them in an orderly manner and prioritising the journalistic processes in a logical manner.

Students should show solidarity with people across the planet, as well as knowledge of the main cultural currents in relation to individual and collective values and respect for human life.

Theoretical and practical knowledge of technologies applied to audiovisual media (photography, radio, sound, television, video, cinema, and multimedia supports), including the ability to use them in the construction and handling of the different products involved in the field of audiovisual communication.

DESCRIPTION OF CONTENTS

1. A genre's issue. Fiction, documentary, non-fiction.

1.1. The space of non-fiction and the contemporary audio-visual universe.

1.2. Discourses of sobriety and social sciences.

1.3 Reconstruction, mockumentary, found footage, web documentary, i-documentary.

2. Modes of the documentary.

2.1. The concept of "modes" and its "blurred boundaries".

2.2. Poetic, expository, observational, interactive or participatory, reflexive and performative.

3. The archival footage at stake.

3.1. The use of stock footage in classical expository documentary mode

3.2. From the compilation film to the found footage strategies.

3.3. the film-essay.



3.4. archive effect and archive affect (Jaimie Baron) in the framework of historic (and dark) tourism

3.5. The i-documentary: home movies and film diaries.

4. Working with the interviews.

4.1. Specialists, informants, witnesses, victims, and perpetrators.

4.2. From talking head TV routines to body language and memory triggers.

4.3. The re-enactment in contemporary art, activism, and documentary film.

Learning outcomes

These contents will be reflected in the following learning outcomes:

- Create and direct the staging of audiovisual film and video productions.
- Execute work plans.
- Execute documentary scripts.
- Handle technologies applied to the media, such as editing, composition and sound.

WORKLOAD

PRESENCIAL ACTIVITIES

Activity	Hours
Theory	30,00
Laboratory	30,00
Total hours	60,00

NON PRESENCIAL ACTIVITIES

Activity	Hours
Attendance at other activities	0,00
Individual or group project	45,00
Independent study and work	30,00
Preparation of lessons	0,00
Preparation for assessment activities	0,00
Resolution of case studies	15,00
Total hours	90,00

TEACHING METHODOLOGY



Face-to-faces activities

Face-to-face teaching will follow the following methodologies:

- **Lecture.**
- **Case studies and analysis** on audiovisual fragments of the syllabus.
- **Classroom exposition and group work** on audiovisual fragments of the syllabus.

Non-face-to-face activities

Students will carry out the following non-face-to-face activities:

- **Preparation of group work** for oral presentations.
- **Elaboration of individual works** in relation to lectures and analytical examples.
- **Resolution of case studies.** Analysis of audiovisual examples in relation to bibliographical references.
- **Study and independent work.** Reading and preparation of texts and films.

Sustainable Development Goals

This subject takes into account especially the following Sustainable Development Goals:

- **SDG 4, Quality Education.** Target 7, that students acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to promote sustainable development, human rights, gender equality, the promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity, and the contribution of culture to sustainable development.
- **SDG 5, Gender equality.** Target 1, end all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.

EVALUATION

The general grading system will follow the Regulation of evaluation and grading of the Universitat de València for bachelor's and master's degrees, approved by the Consell de Govern on May 30, 2017 (ACGUV 108/2017).

Assessment in the first examination period

The **evaluation at first call** will be obtained from several activities:

- **Final written test (70%):** written exam on theoretical issues and the analysis of a film fragment,



screened repeatedly (35%); plus a documentary film made in group and the documents related to its process (script, shooting plan and key issues for the editing), explaining the part made by each one (35%). It can be retaken in the second examination period.

- **Presentation of outlines, summaries and proposed texts (30%)** through an oral presentation in pairs articulating a text from the bibliography and a film from the compulsory list. It cannot be retaken in the second examination period.

Assessment in the second examination period

The assessment in the second examination period will maintain, if applicable, the grades obtained in the components passed in the first examination period. The evaluation of the components failed or not presented will follow the same evaluation criteria as the first.

The work of exposure in class is not recoverable in second call; the grade obtained in the first examination period will be maintained.

The partial grades will be averaged together as long as the result obtained is 40% of the value of the corresponding grade.

Remarks

- Both in the exam and in the rest of tests, exercises or written work, spelling and grammatical correctness will be required. Each fault will entail a reduction of the grade obtained, which can reach up to a failure. In the case of plagiarism in an evaluation work, this may be marked with a numerical grade of zero, regardless of the disciplinary procedure that may be initiated and, if appropriate, the appropriate sanction in accordance with current legislation.
- Intellectual honesty is vital in academic communities, and for the fair evaluation of student work. All papers presented in this course must be of original authorship. Works that make use of fraudulent collaboration or composition with the help of artificial intelligence (ChatGPT or others) will not be accepted, except if their use is part of the contents of the course or is authorized by the teaching staff.
- In the case of plagiarism in an evaluation work, this may be marked with a numerical grade of zero, regardless of the disciplinary procedure that may be initiated and, if appropriate, the appropriate sanction in accordance with current legislation.

REFERENCES

Basic references:

- Baron, Jaimie. Introduction. History, the archive, and the appropriation of the indexical document, in *The Archive Effect: Found Footage and the Audiovisual Experience of History*, New York, Routledge, 2013.
- Boyle, Deirdre. Trauma, Memory, documentary. Re-enactment in two films by Rithy Panh



- (Cambodia) and Garin Nugroho (Indonesia). In Srkar, Bhaskar & Walker, Janet eds., *Documentary Testimonies. Global Archives of Suffering*, New York & London, Routledge, 2010, pp. 155-172.
- Hight, Craig. Mockumentary. A call to play. In Austin, Thomas, and Wilma de Jong eds. *Rethinking Documentary: New Perspectives and Practices*, McGraw-Hill Education, 2008, pp. 204-216.
 - Liebman, Stuart. Introduction, in idem, *Claude Lanzmann's Shoah. Key Essays*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2007, pp. 3-24.
 - Sánchez-Biosca, Vicente. Challenging Old and New Images Representing the Cambodian Genocide: The Missing Picture (Rithy Panh, 2013), in *Genocide Studies and Prevention: An International Journal*, issue 12, no 2 (2018), pp. 140-164.

Additional references:

- Bruzzi, Stella (2006). *New Documentary*, London & New York, Taylor and Francis.
- Nichols, Bill (2010). *Introduction to Documentary*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press
- Juhasz, Alexandra & Lebow, Alisa eds. (2015). *A Companion to Contemporary Documentary Film*, West Sussex, Wiley-Blackwell
- *Documentary Film Festivals: Transformative Learning, Community Building & Solidarity* [electronic resource] / Carole Roy, Rotterdam: Sense Publishers, 2016.
- *Documentary voice & vision: a creative approach to non-fiction media production* / Kelly Anderson & Martin Lucas, with Mick Hurbis-Cherrier ; illustrations by Amy Saidens, New York: Focal Press, 2016.
- *Directing the documentary* [electronic resource] / Michael Rabiger, Burlington, MA: Focal Press, 2015.
- *Documenting the documentary: close readings of documentary film and video / with a foreword by Bill Nichols; edited by Barry Keith Grant and Jeannette Sloniowski*, Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press [2014]